



The Marks of Discipleship: Relationships

Day One: Relationship in Community Worship

Christ calls us to be in relationship with other people. Worship is one way to be in relationship. How has worshipping in a community of believers strengthened your faith? The early Christian church gives us a model of such worship. Read Acts 2:42-47 and 1 Corinthians 14:26. Coming together to praise God has many purposes: to strengthen the church, care for individuals, teach God's Word, join voices in praising God, and inspire one another. The fact that we join together to worship is a step toward putting us in relationship with others. Today, think back to a worship experience. What was the effect of others in worship on your own spiritual journey? Reflect on this in your prayer time.

Day Two: Relationship within Family

Our families are our most primary relationships. What role does spiritual encouragement play in your family? One of the best gifts we can give our family members is to pray for them. Solomon and Samuel were two great leaders of the Old Testament. Both men had family members praying for them. Read 1 Chronicles 29:18-20 and 1 Samuel 1:21-22, 24-28. David prayed that Solomon would continue to follow God as his ancestors had and complete the Temple so all people would worship God for generations. Hannah prayed she would have a son and then dedicate him to serve the Lord. Two powerful prayers. Two influential leaders. For what are you praying for your family members? Are you aspiring for great things? Today, pray a great prayer for each of your family members.

Day Three: Relationship with Prayer Partners

What resources do you have available to you in your spiritual journey? So often we gather resources for all areas of our life but forget our spiritual needs. We need to develop ways to enrich, grow and support our souls. Read Hebrews 3:12-14 and Luke 11:5-10. Partners in the faith encourage one another and help in times of need. They, like Christ and often on Christ's behalf, are able to respond when we make our needs known. Prayer can be part of creating partnership within Christ's disciples. Who can you talk to about being a prayer partner? Make a list of two or three people. Choose one person, bring him/her to God in your prayers, and ask God for discernment. If you have a prayer partner, hold him/her up in your prayers.

Day Four: Relationship in Service

Meeting people's needs is an important part of being followers of Christ. God's Word combined with actions speaks volumes on Christ's behalf. For many of us, there is no greater way to grow relationships than joining together in service. Read Matthew 10:39-42, Matthew 25:34-36, and Mark 10:35-45. The greatest among us in God's kingdom will be the servant. Who are some people you have encountered while serving? Christ hit the nail on the head when he lifted up this model as most important, for in serving we honor our brothers and sisters and humble ourselves. Today pray for a humble heart that is willing to serve a neighbor, friend or stranger in God's name.

Day Five: Relationship in Small Groups

God promises to join in our relationships. Read Matthew 18:20. Name some times you gather in Jesus' name. With whom did you gather? What happens when you are together? God's promises are not empty. For thousands of years, Christians have been coming together and God has met them and moved them to new places. Read Hebrews 10:24-25. These Christians were encouraging each other in an attempt to persevere in their faith. Small groups, designed for Bible study and support for young people, families, or adults, are great tools in helping build up one another and the church. Do you have such a group? Is it time for you to connect with a small group? For your prayers, gather with at least one other person, invite God into your time together, and see what unfolds.

Day Six: Relationship in Discipling Another

What is your most memorable discipline? Was it from a parent? A teacher? A coach? Why is it so memorable? Did your behavior change after? Disciplines help us keep on track. Disciples are students or followers of a teacher. Discipline is often one way to help a student learn what is important and what behaviors are encouraged. We are called, as disciples, to be discipling others. Read Matthew 28:19-20 and Ecclesiastes 4:8-10, 12. Matthew tells us of our calling and Ecclesiastes tells us why. Is it time for you to be discipling another? If you are discipling another, how is your relationship? Where is it going? Today, pray for one person who might need to be discipled.

Day Seven: Relationship in Leadership

Relationships are key within leadership. Leaders cannot exist alone. Within the church, leaders are called, some from outside, others from within. Read Acts 1:21-22 and Romans 8:28. Calling is not about our individual gain, but fulfilling God's work. Are you a leader of children? Of people in need of healing? Of mission work? Of administration? Are you being called to be a leader? Is it time to make a step forward? God invites many of us into leadership. If you are struggling with this issue, spend some time with a trusted friend and have him/her help you understand what's going on in your life. If you are already in leadership, take time to be in relationship with your team. Appreciate them for their gifts and callings. Today, pray for all leaders in your church and the church at large.